

## EM SSAB Chairs Conference Call

March 26, 2015

### Participants

<i>Board</i>	<i>Chairs/Representatives</i>	<i>Site Staff</i>
Hanford	Steve Hudson, Susan Leckband	Kristen Skopeck, Sharon Braswell, Joni Grindstaff
Idaho		Lori McNamara
Nevada	Donna Hruska, Janice Keiserman	Kelly Snyder, Barbara Ulmer
Northern New Mexico	Doug Sayre	Lee Bishop, Menice Santistevan
Oak Ridge	David Hemelright	Pete Osborne, Spencer Gross, Melyssa Noe
Paducah	Ben Peterson	Robert Smith, Eric Roberts
Portsmouth		Greg Simonton
Savannah River	Harold Simon, Eleanor Hopson	de'Lisa Carrico, Tina Watson

### DOE-HQ Representatives

EM-3.2                      Dave Borak, Elizabeth Schmitt, Michelle Hudson, Sayoh Mansaray

### Opening Remarks

Mr. Dave Borak, Designated Federal Officer for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), called the meeting to order.

### Spring 2015 Chairs' Meeting Update

The next EM SSAB Chairs Meeting is scheduled for April 22-23, 2015, in Augusta, Georgia. Members and staff will have an opportunity to participate in a tour of the Savannah River Site (SRS) the day before the meeting begins. Mr. Borak thanked the SRS Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB) for hosting the meeting and the planning committee for all their work. He then reviewed the tentative agenda and asked for feedback from the participants.

Mr. Doug Sayre, Chair of the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NMM CAB), stated that he liked that the fall 2014 Chairs' meeting agenda allowed for discussion of the recommendations on the first day of the meeting. Mr. Borak explained that the current agenda is set up similarly, with 1.5 hours allotted for product development on the first day.

Ms. Susan Leckband, Vice Chair of the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB), mentioned DOE's recent announcement regarding parallel tracks for the storage and disposal of defense waste vs. commercial waste. She suggested that it would be helpful for either Mr. Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, or Mr. Frank Marcinowski, Deputy

Assistant Secretary for Waste Management, to address that topic in their remarks. Mr. Borak agreed to relay the request to the presenters.

Ms. Tina Watson, SRS CAB Staff, asked if she could post the meeting agenda to the SRS website. Mr. Borak asked her to wait until the Safety Culture presentation speaker is confirmed. Mr. Borak reminded participants that their input for the Chairs Round Robin presentation is due April 10.

There are three draft products currently slated for deliberation at the upcoming Chairs' meeting.

- Draft Recommendation: Initiate Process of Permit Modification for Additional Surface Storage at WIPP.

This recommendation resulted from the fall 2014 EM SSAB Chairs meeting. Several of the local boards requested that there be further discussion on this recommendation and that additional revisions be made to the document before moving it forward. Mr. Steve Hudson, Chair of the HAB, has been working on an updated version to share with the Chairs at the meeting in Augusta.

- Draft Recommendation: Identification and Preparation of Interim Disposition Site(s) to Enable LANL Transuranic Disposal Operations and Nation's Other Sites' Waste Disposal Operations to Remain Continually Operational.

This is a new recommendation, submitted by the NNM CAB. Mr. Sayre and Mr. Lee Bishop, Co-DDFO of the NNM CAB, provided a brief summary of the recommendation, which discusses the need for a contingency plan for transuranic waste generator sites should Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) experience another service interruption in the future. Mr. Hudson noted that the recommendation addressed many of the concerns HAB members had with the Chairs' original draft WIPP recommendation, and applauded the NNM CAB's approach to the issue. Mr. Sayre indicated that the NNM CAB would like to look at both proposed WIPP recommendations and create a product that is useful to the sites across the country, and acceptable to all of the local boards.

Mr. David Hemelright, Chair of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB), noted that he is curious about what Mr. Marcinowski will share regarding the timeline for reopening WIPP, since the recommendations will make the issue more pertinent than it was last year.

Mr. Sayre said that Mr. Jeff Kendall, NNM CAB liaison and General Counsel to the New Mexico Environment Department, gave a presentation at the most recent NNM CAB meeting, and indicated that DOE is considering a partial reopening of WIPP in one year. Mr. Sayre added that the Accident Investigation Board's Phase 2 report is still of interest.

- Draft Document: Budget Best Practices

This document came out of the fall 2014 EM SSAB Chairs meeting. Mr. Hudson had taken the action to further develop the draft for discussion at the meeting in Augusta. In the interim, he

has looked through the provided material and divided the information into four overarching sections:

- Principles and Consideration
- Information
- Education
- Communications

Ms. Elizabeth Schmitt, DOE EM staff, noted that time had been allotted on the spring Chairs' meeting agenda for deliberation on these products. Mr. Marcinowski and Ms. Connie Flohr, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Planning and Budget, will be in attendance and can field any questions about technical issues that may arise during those discussions.

Mr. Sayre mentioned that the NNM CAB is developing a third recommendation to put forward that pertains to the fines that will be assessed against WIPP and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) for the WIPP shutdown. The NNM CAB believes that someone should take on a supplemental environmental project that will be beneficial to the area, in lieu of paying fines. A draft should be available to share before the meeting in Augusta.

### **Student Liaison Discussion**

Mr. Borak noted that DOE does not require the boards to have student liaisons, and not all of the boards have them. He asked what value the students bring to the board, and how student liaison programs are managed. Mr. Borak opened the floor to discussion.

Mr. Sayre said that the NNM CAB began its student liaison program two years ago. Two high school student and a college student who interns for the LANL were appointed as student members. The program is a good way to involve young people and educate them on issues relating to legacy waste.

Mr. Bishop discussed the NNM CAB's program in further detail. The board focuses on finding students from the local high schools. These students do not have as many opportunities as students from Los Alamos High School, and serving student liaisons helps their resumes. He added that the NNM CAB tends to consist of mainly older members. The board has found that having students sit with the members during meetings has encouraged board members to behave more formally and respectfully, as well as more professionally toward each other.

Ms. Donna Hruska, Chair of the Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB), said that the NSSAB has had four student liaisons in the past three school years, but currently does not have one this school year. The board is working on strengthening the program and adding a student for next year. The NSSAB worked with local high schools and tasked students with developing a project. The project consisted of a pre-test to measure the student's classmates' knowledge of the Nevada site, a presentation by the student liaison to the students regarding the NSSAB and the Nevada site, and a post-test given to the student's classmates to measure whether the students gained knowledge on the information presented. At the end of the school year, the student liaisons were also tasked with providing a presentation on the final results to the NSSAB. The

NSSAB found they needed stronger faculty support because the board relied on the students using facilities at the schools. The end product from the student liaison was not as strong as the board had envisioned.

Mr. Hemelright added that the ORSSAB has had student representatives for a long time. A few years ago one student introduced the board to Facebook. The student representatives have been beneficial. They participate, but do not have any set projects. There is a dedicated board member who acts as the student representative's mentor. Mr. Pete Osborne, contractor staff member for the ORSSAB, added that it is critical to have a member who will sit with student at the meetings and get them involved.

Ms. Menice Santistevan, contractor staff member for the NNM CAB, said that the NNM CAB's students are currently working on a recommendation to the NNM CAB's Executive Committee on best practices for how to recruit new student members. The students are also working on recruitment tools, such as videos. The students will give a presentation on their experience as student liaisons. Mr. Osborne asked if the NNM CAB could share the students' recommendation with the other boards; Ms. Santistevan agreed.

Ms. Janice Keiserman, Vice Chair of the NSSAB, said that the board believes that the term "liaison" stops students from getting involved, and wants to treat this role as a mini-internship that would, perhaps, allow students to present to the school and the board for extra credit. Mr. Osborne added that the ORSSAB did something similar, and worked with two schools five or six years in a row. When the ORSSAB gave a yearly presentation to each school, the student representatives would assist. The students said it was a good experience.

Ms. Watson said that the SRS CAB ran into issues using the term "internship" because it involved credit, which involves oversight and management of the students. The board is considering using the term "ambassador," and is looking for college students who would do paid work, as opposed to volunteering. Ms. Watson asked how other boards handled the issue of funding.

Mr. Bishop responded that the NNM CAB used interns from LANL, since those students were already being compensated by LANL and working with the board was just another experience from their internship.

Mr. Borak asked about other challenges involving student liaisons, including liabilities where transportation is involved. Mr. Bishop noted that the NNM CAB could not take students under 18 years of age into radiological areas of the site. For meetings, teens old enough to drive would drive themselves, and other students would get rides from their parents.

Ms. Leckband asked about a display at the Paducah site that was built by students that identified the various waste strata. She inquired as to whether the display was built by a student liaison group. Mr. Eric Roberts, contractor staff lead for the Paducah CAB, shared that the project was done by an outreach grant through the University of Kentucky's (UK) College of Design and the students were not affiliated with the Paducah CAB. Mr. Robert Smith, Federal Coordinator for

the Paducah CAB, added that UK has taken on the site as a project; every year a new group of students create different scenarios and make models.

Mr. Borak asked if any other boards were considering establishing student liaison programs. Mr. Hudson said that he and Ms. Leckband put some data together, and that there is enthusiasm behind the idea, but the HAB is currently very busy. Ms. Leckband said that after hearing what the other boards have done, it is obvious that a person at DOE needs to be involved. She believes that if a teacher was involved, DOE would find the project useful, and students could work on a project as part of their curriculum. A student liaison could provide input on what sorts of visual aids would help the public better understand the Hanford site. Decades of cleanup remain, so it is important that the HAB finds a way to spark the younger generations' interest and receive their input.

Mr. Roberts mentioned that the Paducah CAB had a student liaison at one point, and that the Portsmouth SSAB looked into getting one. The boards have not found a way for a student to blend in with the functionality of the board without them having to jump through a lot of hoops. The boards found that they wanted DOE to engage with the local students, so that students are aware of the work going on and the career opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). The Portsmouth and Paducah boards felt that this outreach should be part of DOE's public affairs program, as opposed to a board activity, so they made their thoughts known to DOE. Mr. Roberts noted that the Paducah and Portsmouth sites have done a lot of outreach directed at schools, such as mentoring and engineering programs. This allows the site to reach more students than a student liaison program.

Ms. Leckband added the HAB does not have the budget for a student liaison, and the board has to consider the issue of liability. The HAB has also been struggling with the role of a student, and how to allow the student to contribute without disrupting the meetings. Ms. Leckband noted that DOE and other regulatory agencies already do a lot of outreach, but perhaps the HAB needs to work on advice on recommendations on how agencies can become more involved with the schools.

Ms. Watson asked that any boards with written information about their student liaison programs send the documents to her, so that she could share them with SRS CAB. Ms. Lori McNamara, contractor support staff for the INL CAB, mentioned that the board has been researching the issue of student participation and plans to discuss it at an upcoming meeting. She added that the INL CAB would also appreciate any written information on the student liaison programs.

### **Report from the Waste Management Conference in Phoenix**

The 2015 Waste Management Conference, held March 15-19, included a session that focused on "The Effectiveness of Advisory Boards: the US DOE EM Site Specific Advisory Board Experience." Members of several of the local boards submitted papers to the conference and presented at the session.

The panelist and the papers they submitted are as follows:

- DOE  
Paper: US DOE's Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board: 20 Years of Community Involvement
- Mr. Ben Peterson, Chair of the Paducah CAB  
Paper: How Web Based GIS was Used in Waste Disposal Option Discussions to Develop a Better Recommendation
- Ms. Nina Spinelli, Vice Chair of the SRS CAB  
Paper: Online Meeting Technology for the Savannah River Citizen's Advisory Board
- Mona Varela, member of the NNM CAB  
Paper: Diversity & the Citizens' Advisory Board: Aligning Disparate Views for Better Results

Mr. Peterson mentioned that the session was poorly attended by the public. Ms. Hruska added that the panel she was presenting on conflicted with the EM SSAB session. Ms. Leckband noted that in past years, public attendance at the session of the conference has also been low.

### **Other Business**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m. EST.